March 11, 2015

The Honorable Klint Kesto
Chairman, Judiciary Committee
Michigan House of Representatives
State Capitol
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

RE: Recreational Use of Private Airfields in Michigan

Dear Chairman Kesto:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), a not-for-profit membership organization, is the world's largest aviation organization, representing the interests of general aviation aircraft owners and operators – including over 12,000 in Michigan. Since 1939, AOPA has been committed to ensuring the safety, future viability, and development of general aviation airports and their facilities as a part of our national transportation system. We write to express our support for Michigan House Bill 4244

House Bill 4244 would provide liability protection to owners of private airfields in very specific circumstances by including 'aviation activities' in Michigan's existing recreational use statute (RUS). Currently, the RUS provides liability protection for private landowners when someone is using their land recreationally. However, recreational aviation activity is not specifically mentioned in the existing statute and is therefore creating concern amongst the aviation community and in turn limiting the industry's growth in the State. By adding "recreational aviation" to the list of acceptable recreational activities denoted in the RUS, the Michigan Legislature can provide the same level of liability protection afforded to skiers, ATVers, hikers, and others to the aviation industry while operating on privately-owned land.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. AOPA and other local aviation organizations have been very successful in securing similar RUS amendments in other states with approximately 23 other states having enacted similar legislation with positive results. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (301) 695-2095.

Very truly yours,

Bryan Budds
Great Lakes Regional Manager

cc: Michigan House of Representatives Judiciary Committee